

I therefore now withdraw opposition to Urlich's proposal. Withdrawal of my opposition should not be construed as withdrawal of the facts and opinions expressed in my previous comment (BZN 49: 145–149), or my full agreement with the submissions by Richard Melville (BZN 50: 55–56) and N.J. Silberling (BZN 50: 141–142). I am simply adopting the position that in this case geological considerations be allowed to override the zoological rules. I take this position, which will satisfy the German geologists, only because acceptance of Urlich's proposal, although contrary to the rules, in my opinion will not result in a radical change in the zoological interpretation of the genus *Ceratites*.

Comments on the proposed conservation of *Hydromantes* Gistel, 1848 by the designation of *Salamandra genei* Temminck & Schlegel, 1838 as the type species (Amphibia, Caudata)

(Case 2868; see BZN 50: 219–223)

(1) Mark R. Jennings

Fish and Wildlife Service, National Ecology Research Center, United States Department of the Interior, 1830 Sharon Avenue, Davis, California 95616, U.S.A. and Department of Herpetology, California Academy of Sciences, California, U.S.A.

I write to support the application submitted by Prof Hobart Smith & Dr David Wake.

I have been involved in a number of projects dealing with the genus *Hydromantes* in California over the past decade — everything from check lists (e.g. Jennings, 1983) to the current status of *H. platycephalus* in the State (Jennings & Hayes, in press) — and I believe that the replacement of this long-established generic name by *Hydromantoides* would cause needless confusion amongst professionals and the lay public.

Looking through my own library resources, I find that I have over 40 pieces of primary literature, field guides, popular publications and agency reports dealing with this genus. Only three publications (Camp, 1916; Lanza & Vanni, 1981; and Dubois, 1984) do not utilize the name *Hydromantes*. Because of the importance of this salamander to land management agencies in California (both *H. brunus* and *H. shastae* are listed by the State of California as threatened; *H. platycephalus* and an undescribed species of *Hydromantes* from the Owens Valley are also protected by other State Laws) and its presence in a number of State and National Parks where it is showcased (e.g. Merced River Canyon Ecological Reserve, Yosemite National Park), it is desirable to prevent certain confusion in future reports, public interpretation materials and press releases and to continue to use the name *Hydromantes* for these web-toed salamanders.

I would also like to point out that, because of its uniqueness and limited distribution, *Hydromantes* (especially *H. platycephalus*) is represented in a large number of museum collections around the world. My own data base indicates 475 specimens scattered amongst 22 collections. Changing all the specimen name records in these collections would seem to be a pointless task. The best mode of action would be for the Commission to approve the application and thus negate the need for such a task.

Additional references

Jennings, M.R. 1983. An annotated check list of the amphibians and reptiles of California. *California Fish and Game*, 69(3): 151-171.

Jennings, M.R. & Hayes, M.P. (In press). *Amphibian and reptile species of special concern in California*. California Department of Fish and Game, Inland Fisheries Division, Rancho Cordova, California. Final Report Under Contract (8023).

(2) Harold A. Dundee

Department of Ecology, Evolution and Organismal Biology, 310 Dinwiddie Hall, Tulane University, New Orleans, Louisiana 70118-5698, U.S.A.

Smith & Wake noted that Gistel (1848) used a replacement name *Hydromantes* for *Geotriton*, and that Tschudi (1838) used *Geotriton genei*, a name he attributed to Bonaparte but which was made available (as *Salamandra genei*) by Temminck & Schlegel (1838). Although the name *Hydromantes* was not used until Dunn (1923), the post-Dunn usage of *Hydromantes* has been persistent and voluminous. To change this will only create confusion and delay in the retrieval of literature information for current and future studies. Name stability, as used in the sophisticated studies of recent decades, becomes paramount for systematists. The recommendations of Smith & Wake seem most compelling and I therefore strongly support the application.

(3) Giorgio Mancino

Dipartimento di Fisiologia e Biochimica, Sezione di Biologia Cellulare e dello Sviluppo, Università degli Studi di Pisa, Via Carducci 13, 56010 Ghezzano, Italy

Replacement of the name *Hydromantes* would cause great confusion and in this case stability should be allowed to override priority. Moreover, in my opinion, so far there is insufficient genetic (e.g. hybridological) and cytogenetic (e.g. meiotic abnormalities in species hybrids) evidence to permit the splitting of the genus *Hydromantes* into two different genera (*Hydromantes* and *Hydromantoides*). Zoologists should continue to use the name *Hydromantes* for both the Californian and European populations until there is further morpho-anatomical, physiological, genetical and genomical, as well as etho-ecological, evidence.

(4) Benedetto Lanza

Dipartimento di Biologia Animale e Genetica 'Leo Pardi', Università degli Studi di Firenze, Via Romana 17119, 50125 Firenze, Italy

Lanza & Vanni (1981) assigned the American *Hydromantes* to the new genus *Hydromantoides*, a view supported by some European herpetologists. Consequently, I (Lanza, 1986) raised to generic level the subgenus *Speleomantes* Dubois, 1984. For some years *Speleomantes* has been used by a number of European authors as the valid name for the Old World plethodontid salamanders (three mainland and four Sardinian species); *Speleomantes* has been used also in at least two books (Stumpel-Rienks, 1992 and Nöllert & Nöllert, 1992). However, Profs Luciano Bullini and Giuseppe Nascetti (*Dipartimento di Genetica e Biologia Evolutiva, Università di Roma 'La Sapienza', Via Lancisi 29, 00161 Roma, Italy*) join with me in supporting Smith & Wake's application (see also Lanza, Nascetti & Bullini, 1986, p. 263).